

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 OMB-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 SAM-01

DRC-01 /089 W

----- 092897

O R 171239Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2202

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2258

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION

REF: TEL AVIV 2209

1. MANEUVERING RE ISRAELI POLITICAL CRISIS CONTINUES AT FAST PACE. MEETING OF LABOR PARTY EXECUTIVE BRUEAU AND LABOR PARTY KNESSET REPRESENTATIVES APRIL 16 APPROVED RESOLUTION (31 IN FAVOR, 13 AGAINST) "TO CONVENE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF PARTY TO SELECT CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTERSHIP" WHO WIL ATTEMPT FORM NEW GOVERNMENT. MEETING DID NOT COMMIT ITSELF TO HOLDING NEW ELECTION. RESOLUTION WILL BE SUBMITTED TO SOME 600 MEMBERS OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE FOR APPROVAL AT MEETING SCHEDULED APRIL 21.

2. WHILE THERE WAS SIGNIFICANT CROSSING OF FACTION LINES IN
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VOTE, MOST OF EX-MAPAI SUPPORTED RESOLUTION WHILE MAJORITY

OF EX-RAFI AND EX-AHDUT AVODAH OPPOSED.

3. FINMIN SAPIR, WHO AGAIN REJECTED PLEAS FOR HIS CANDIDACY AS PRIME MINISTER, STRONGLY OPPOSED RESOLUTION, WARNING THAT IT IS "PIPEDREAM" TO THINK OF FORMING NEW GOVT UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. WHILE RABIN AND ZADOK SUPPORTED RESOLUTION, ALMOGI AND BAR-LEV FAVORED DISSOLVING PRESENT KNESSET AND HOLDING NEW ELECTION TOWARD END OF YEAR.

4. DAYAN, WHO DID NOT ATTEND MEETING, WARNED AT AN EARLIER RAFI MEETING THAT HE WOULD NOT SUPPORT JUST ANY CANDIDATE PARTY SELECTS. DAYAN'S VEILED THREAT OF SPLIT WAS REPUDIATED BY SEVERAL EX-RAFI MEMBERS, NOTABLY PERES AND NAVON.

5. IN SUPPORTING RESOLUTION WHICH DID NOT INCLUDE COMMITMENT FOR NEW ELECTION, PARTY GENSEC YADLIN EXPLAINED THAT NEW ELECTION SHOULD NOT BE CALLED UNTIL AGRANAT COMMISSION REPORT IS COMPLETED, ELECTION REFORM BILL CAN BE PASSED BY KNESSET AND NEW INTERNAL PARTY ELECTIONS CAN BE HELD.

6. COMMENT: MAIN MOTIVATION OF THOSE FAVORING FORMATION NEW GOVT NOW--RATHER THAN LET CARETAKER GOVT CONTINUE UNTIL NEW ELECTION--APPEARED TO BE DESIRE TO IMPROVE PUBLIC IMAGE OF LABOR PARTY AND FACE NEW ELECTION, WHEN HELD, WITH NEW LEADERSHIP ALREADY IN PLACE.

7. IF CENTRAL COMMITTEE APPROVES RESOLUTION, SELECTION OF CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER ACCEPTABLE TO ALL FACTIONS AND GROUPS OF LABOR PARTY WILL BE FIRST OBSTACLE TO OVERCOME. SPECIAL FIVE-MAN COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED TO SELECT CANDIDATES FOR CENTRAL COMMITTEE APPROVAL. AMONG MOST LIKELY CANDIDATES WILL BE ZADOK, RABIN, ALMOGI, PERES AND ALLON. PRESS SPECULATION INCREASIGLY POINTING TO ZADOK AND RABIN AS TOP CONTENDERS, WITH FORMER MORE ACCEPTABLE TO EX-RAFI FACTION. IF PARTY CAN AGREE ON CANDIDAT, HIS TASK IN FORMING COALTION GOVT MAY PROVE MORE DIFFICULT THAN EVER IN VIEW PROSPECTS OF TOUGHTER POSITION OF NATIONAL RELIGIOUS PARTY IN FAVOR OF NATIONAL UNITY GOVT WITH LIKUD.

8. ALTHOUGH LABOR PARTY RESOLUTION DID NOT SPECIFY NEW
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ELECTION, THAT RESULT SEEMS LIKELY AT MOMENT IN VIEW
LABOR PARTY OBSTACLES IN AGREEING ON CANDIDATE AND FORMING
VIALE COALTION, AS WELL AS CONTINUED ORGANIZED PRESSURES
FOR NEW ELECTION. IF NEW ELECTIONS HELD, OCTOBER SEEMS
EARLIEST LIKELY DATE.
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